

## PRELIMINARY SAT/NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP QUALIFYING TEST (PSAT / NMSQT)

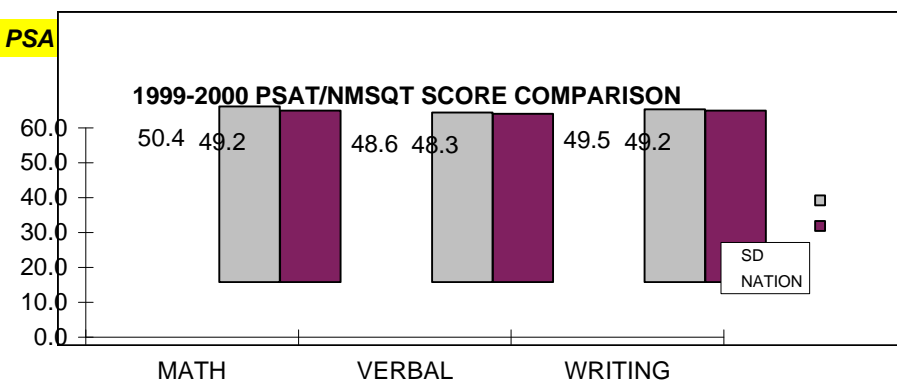
High school students enter the National Merit Scholarship Program by taking the PSAT/NMSQT, usually during their junior year. Graded on a scale of 20-80, the PSAT/NMSQT tests students' math, verbal and writing skills. Each state is given an allocation of students to qualify as semifinalists based on the state's percentage of the national total of high school graduating seniors. In South Dakota, approximately 50 students with the highest scores become semifinalists. Semifinalists must meet several requirements to advance to finalist standing. Only finalists are considered for merit scholarship awards. About 90% of semifinalists become finalists. In South Dakota, approximately 40 students are annually chosen as finalists.

### PARTICIPANT SUMMARY - NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Year	# Tested	Year	# Tested
1990-1991	2,567	1995-1996	3,671
1991-1992	2,810	1996-1997	4,031
1992-1993	3,025	1997-1998	3,797
1993-1994	3,333	1998-1999	3,697
1994-1995	3,225	1999-2000	3,663

### PERFORMANCE SUMMARY - PSAT/NMSQT

Year	Verbal	Math	Year	Verbal	Math	Writing
1990-1991	50.2	50.0	1995-1996	49.0	50.0	
1991-1992	50.7	50.8	1996-1997	48.2	50.8	
1992-1993	49.4	50.2	1997-1998	49.0	50.5	50.4
1993-1994	50.1	50.7	1998-1999	48.7	50.2	49.4
1994-1995	49.2	49.5	1999-2000	48.6	50.4	49.5



#### FACT SUMMARY:

- ◆ The number of PSAT/NMSQT participants in South Dakota has risen over 30% during the last 10 years.
- ◆ South Dakota had 58 semi-finalists and 52 finalists in 1999-2000. There were nine \$2,000 scholarship winners, twenty-eight college sponsored scholarship winners and one corporate sponsored winner.
- ◆ 1998 was the first year of the writing portion of the test.

#### THE TYPICAL PSAT/NMSQT PARTICIPANT:

- ◆ performs better on the math section than on the verbal or writing section of the PSAT/NMSQT.
- ◆ consistently scores equal to or higher than the national average in math, verbal, and writing sections.